

# Down by the River

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## UTRR & partners make a difference in 2021

Upper Tennessee River Roundtable relies upon partnerships to achieve goals through collaboration and implementation. As the pandemic continued through this year, UTRR and partners cautiously planned projects and activities while canceling large education events, such as our conservation camps. UTRR and partners safely completed projects that reduced erosion (see page two), disposed of household hazardous waste, and built rain barrels for citizens to conserve water.

UTRR and partners safely completed outreach activities that trained citizens how to monitor streams, taught youth about the importance of rivers, and cleaned up waterways. When in-person participation did not seem wise, UTRR created videos and did virtual events whenever possible. As an example, April Grace, top left, agreed to present a lesson for a video we created for the Clinch Coalition Naturalist Rally. *Continued P. 3*



# UTRR completes projects under TMDL grant

Upper Tennessee River Roundtable closed a Total Daily Maximum Load (TMDL) grant in 2021 through the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality although continued forward with another TMDL in the same watershed. The closed grant resulted in these achievements, which were coordinated and implemented by U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Partners for Fish & Wildlife, Canaan Valley Institute, and in conjunction with the Tazewell Soil and Water Conservation District:

- Completion of two projects along the North Fork headwaters & South Fork of the Clinch River in Tazewell.
- The South Fork project took place at Dunford Park and included a total of 2,000 feet of stream bank stabilization / stream restoration, an additional 1-acre of riparian buffer establishment, and 150 trees/shrubs planted, including 15 larger trees. The stream bank stabilization was carried out over two phases.
- The North Fork project at Tanglewood Farm included 3,000 feet of stream bank stabilization through placement of live stakes and 5 acres of riparian buffer establishment. This 5-acre buffer establishment began in Spring 2020 and included the planting of 244 trees.
- The showing of the film, "Hidden Rivers," at the former Ramey Ford site with the town of Tazewell, the Tazewell Soil and Water Conservation District, and SATIRA, in an outdoor drive-in setting.

Funds provided to the Tazewell Soil and Water Conservation District resulted in these achievements through the Roundtable's TMDL grant:

- Completed 2 Agricultural Best Management Practices within the Upper Clinch
- Protected 1,301 linear feet of stream bank
- Created 1.22 acres of riparian buffer
- Improved grazing and protected stream bank on 141 acres
- Installed 2 Livestock watering systems
- Installed over 1,244 feet exclusion fence
- Installed over 8,036 feet of interior fence
- Installed 13 Livestock water troughs
- Installed over 8,388 of pipeline

The remaining TMDL grant held by the Roundtable will include additional stream bank stabilization through riparian buffer plantings, more outreach, and installation of additional agricultural projects to protect the water quality of the Upper Clinch.

# UTRR launches successful new fundraiser

Upper Tennessee River Roundtable partnered with its newest business member, Tumbling Creek Company, to implement a successful fundraiser held in August at the cider production facility in Meadowview. UTRR welcomed new friendly faces and reconnected with faithful friends and supporters.

Abingdon Vineyards/Winery hosted UTRR's Tenth Annual Three Rivers Art Auction late last month, also with positive results. These events raised much needed funds for UTRR's clean river work in the Upper Tennessee River Basin.

The next fundraiser is the Annual Giving Campaign tied in with Giving Tuesday, a day to give back to the organizations that bring about transformation in their communities. Membership drive will follow in early 2022.



At left are Mark Finney and Tom McMullen of Tumbling Creek Cider Company. Up top are fundraising committee member Martha Chapman, UTRR treasurer Karen Gilmer, and UTRR chair Dustin Keith at the cider event.

## Successful projects, outreach completed with partners

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The video can now be used for other educational purposes. The two smiling children on page one attended our "All About Bugs" summer camp with Norton. The campers loved getting into Clear Creek to search for macros. UTRR partnered with Sustain Abingdon and Keep Southwest Virginia Beautiful on the Annual Muster Grounds Cleanup. Robyn Raines, Sustain Abingdon committee member whose business Whitetop Yoga is a UTRR supporter, helped with the cleanup as shown top right on page one. Bottom left on page one, Maddie Gordon received the UTRR citizen/educator award and bottom right, Elizabeth Bennett and the Tazewell Soil and Water Conservation District received the district award. For a complete list of our award winners, see [www.uppertnriver.org](http://www.uppertnriver.org).



# Looking ahead to productive 2022

UTRR has a list of projects already underway to complete in 2022 with partners while also concentrating on new work. Funds from the VA Department of Environmental Quality and the Tennessee Valley Authority support UTRR's different projects in the Upper Clinch in Tazewell. This work includes stream bank stabilization at the Moose Lodge through DEQ and aquatic habitat restoration activities in the Little River through TVA funds.

Additional agriculture projects are planned to protect water quality with the grant from DEQ. These projects are coordinated and installed through partnerships with U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Partners for Fish & Wildlife, Canaan Valley Institute, and Tazewell Soil and Water Conservation District.

A grant from Dominion Charitable Foundation will fund two projects, an upgrade to the outdoor classroom in Saltville, with landscape architect Jeff Stapleton shown top left, and bank stabilization of a creek and pond at the Abingdon 4-H Center, with Lance Debord of Artemis Consulting top right..

A butterfly garden is being planned with Richard Hudson at Clinch River Farms in partnership with Canaan Valley Institute and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Partners for Fish & Wildlife (at right). UTRR will continue trash treasures workshops, education events, stream monitoring, and more with assistance from a DEQ support grant, a Clif Bar Family Foundation grant, and other funds.

